feasibility and availability of resources. The type of new service *viz.* Rajdhani, Shatabadi, Mail/Express and class of travel provided in new services is also dependent on travel demand on specific routes.

(d) As normally trains are introduced on sections where the passenger trains are already running and are certified fit for passenger services, the introduction of new services does not affect safety. In order to cater to growth in traffic, various works for augmenting line and terminal capacity are planned on saturated sectors. Before introduction of a new service availability of adequate maintenance, infrastructure and resources is also ensured.

Failure to provide safety to passengers

†1438. SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have miserably failed to provide comprehensive safety to the railway passengers;

(b) if so, the reasons therefor;

(c) whether Government intend to provide safe rail journey to railway passengers; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) No, Sir. As a result of concerted efforts on the part of Indian Railways, the number of consequential train accidents has come down from 473 in 2000-01 to 414 in 2001-2, and further down to 351 in 2002-03*. This downward trend has continued in the current year as well, with 85* consequential train accidents taking place during the period April-June 2003, as compared to 103* in the same period last year. (*Provisional figures).

(b) Does not arise.

(c) and (d) Yes, Sir. Ensuring a safe rail journey and preventing rail accident is the prime concern of Indian Railways and consistent efforts are being made in this direction. Some of these measures are as under:—

†Original notice of the question was received in Hindi.

(i) A non-lapsable Special Railway Safety Fund (SRSF) of Rs. 17,000 crores has been set up to wipe out the arrears of replacement of over aged assets like track, bridges, rolling stock, and signalling gears within a fixed time frame of six years. The fund has been operational since October 2001.

(ii) Extended field trials of prototype Anti Collision Device (ACD) have been successfully completed on Northern Railway. Works for provision of ACD covering about 3500 route kms on Northeast Frontier, Southern, South Central, South Western and Northern Railways have been sanctioned. ACD survey for 10,000 route kms has also been sanctioned.

(iii) Fouling Mark to Fouling Mark track circuiting on entire 'A', 'B', 'C', 'D' and 'D Spl.' route where speed is more than 75 kmph has been completed.

(iv) Auxiliary Warning System has been working on Mumbai suburban sections.

(v) Last vehicle check by Axle Counter has been introduced on over 200 block sections and is being progressively added.

(vi) To meet the situation arising out of track stresses and fatigue, upgradation of track structure whenever called for is being undertaken on a planned basis by utilization of 60-kg rails on concrete sleepers. The specifications of rail steel have been upgraded and are in conformity with the International Union of Railways (UIC) specifications.

(vii) For improving maintenance and better asset reliability, Railways are continuing to eliminate fish-plated joints on tracks by welding rails to convert all single rails into long welded rails to the extent possible. During relaying/ construction of new lines/gauge conversion, long welded rails are laid on concrete sleepers to the extent possible. Turnouts are aslo being improved systematically.

(viii) "Quality Management Systems" have been developed and

implemented as per the ISO 9001 Quality standards in all the Production Units, majority of the Workshops and some of the sheds/depots. All other important manufacturing/ repair units have also been advised to develop and implement Quality Management Systems. Ultrasonic testing equipment is being used for detection of flaws in the axles.

(ix) There has been progressive increase in the use of Tie Tamping and ballast cleaning machines for track maintenance. Also, sophisticated Track Recording Cars, Ultrasonic Flaw Detectors, Self Propelled Ultrasonic Rail Testing Cars, Oscillograph Cars and Portable Accelerometers are being used progressively.

(x) Track renewals are carried out whenever they become due for renewal.

(xi) Modern bridge inspection and management system is being adopted, which will involve non-destructive testing techniques, under water inspections, fibre composite wrapping, mapping unknown foundations and integrity testing, etc.

(xii) Intensive patrolling of Railway track is carried out at vulnerable locations during monsoon, summer and winter.

(xiii) Interlocking of level crossing gates, provision of telephones at manned level crossings are some of the other safety aids being installed on the Railways.

(xiv) New technological inputs like solid state interlocking, digital axle counter, high performance point machines are being progressively introduced for enhanced safety and reliability of signalling systems.

(xv) Walkie-talkie sets have been provided to Drivers and Guards of all trains for faster communication. Guards and Drivers are also being progressively provided with LED based electronic flashing lamps and hand signal having better visibility than the conventional kerosene lit signal lamps.

(xvi) Training facilities for drivers, guards and staff connected with train operation have been modernised, including use

of Simulators for training of drivers. Rs. 73 crore have been provided under SRSF for upgradation of Training Institutes and Disaster Management Modules are also being developed.

(xvii) Performance of the staff connected with train operation is being constantly monitored and those found deficient are sent for crash training courses. Safety staff overdue for refresher course is not permitted on train duties.

(xviii) Periodical Safety Audit of different divisions by multi-disciplinary teams has been introduced. Inter-Railway inspections and inspections by Railway Board teams have also been introduced.

(xix) Drivers are given Breathalyzer tests to check for alcohol consumption while signing on and surprise checks are also done to identify defaulters.

(xx) Emphasis is given on surprise inspections and ambush checks. Night inspections are conducted regularly to eradicate adoption of short cut methods and those found to be slack are taken up.

(xxi) Introducing anti-climbing features in coaches to minimize effects of accidents. Coaches with Center Buffer Coupler (CBC) are being manufactured.

(xxii) Development of fire proof coaches is being done utilizing the latest technology available in respect of materials, fire proofing technique, etc.

(xxiii) Development of design of passenger coaches with features of crashworthiness which will absorb most of the impact energy leaving the passenger area unaffected.

(xxiv) With the revamping of Railway Recruitment Boards (RRBs), quality of staff being selected through RRBs has substantially improved.

(xxv) Use of fire retardant materials for coach furnishings.

(xxvi) Fire resistant PVC flooring, interior paneling, ceiling, upholstery etc.

(xxvii) Improvement in materials used in electrical fittings, fixtures such as MCB, light fittings, terminal boards, connectors etc.

(xxviii) Intensive publicity campaigns to prevent the traveling public from carriage of inflammable goods.

Railway zone for Kerala

1439. SHRI N.K. PREMACHANDRAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Railways have received any proposal from the Kerala Government requesting to allot a Railway Zone exclusive for Kerala; and

(b) whether Railway are aware that difficulties in getting due share to Kerala are being experienced because of the absence of an exclusive Railway zone?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI BANDARU DATTATRAYA): (a) Yes, Sir. Representations have been received from various forums including one from the Minister of Transport, Government of Kerala.

(b) In this connection, it may be stated that new zones are set up keeping in view factors like size, workload, accessibility, traffic pattern and other administrative/operational requirements consistent with the needs of economy and efficiency and not on regional considerations. The demand for a zone in Kerala, when examined in the light of these considerations have not been found feasible. The present arrangement is working satisfactorily.

Recommendations of CRS

1440. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) details of the recommendations made by Commission of Railway Safety during the last three years on each rail accident;

(b) details of the recommendations accepted for implementation and those rejected and those pending consideration; and